

Living in the Pages of an Ian Fleming Novel

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Summary: Freddie Lyon had always wanted to be a spy, and now here he was as MI6's quartermaster. But keeping both his agents alive and his past identity secret while remaining sane is not the easiest thing. With terrorist attacks, undercover missions, discreetly helping The Hour, and general Q branch shenanigans, let the fun never end.

1. Prologue

"You know how sometimes I can't tell you how I know certain things?"

"Yes."

"Those skills have led me to a job offer I don't think I can turn down."

"You're leaving The Hour?"

"Yes. But I'll be watching every week. And no matter what, even if I can't tell you everything--"

"You don't do that anyway."

"I want you to know I am here for you, Money Penny. And nothing can tear us apart. We are possible. No matter what."

2. Ruler of the Internet

Bond was sitting in his office, idly reading through the newspapers stacked on his desk that he had requested his secretary bring for him, when the phone rang. He lifted it to his ear.

"M wants to see you in his office," Miss Money Penny said.

"Tell him I'll be right up," Bond replied. He hung up the phone and straightened his suit as he stood. M's office was only on the floor directly above him so he opted for the stairs at the end of the hallway rather than the lifts. This week had been a slow week anyways and the inactivity was nearly killing him. Even helping test out some new recruits wasn't doing it. He hoped that M had a good mission for him. The news didn't have much in the way of political scandals or world events, but their mission was usually to prevent things from becoming world news, so that wasn't a good indicator.

He reached M's office and Moneypenny waved him in, already on the phone with someone else. He passed through the double quilted doors and sat down in the leather chair in front of the large desk. M set down the papers he was leafing through and leaned forward.

"Have you done much reading about local parliamentary news lately Double-oh Seven?" he asked.

"I can't say I have found it very interesting, sir. Just the usual people sleeping with animals and insulting other ministers while somehow managing not to offend so many countries as to overwork us." M snorted at his synopsis. "Is there something in particular I ought to have noticed?"

"Not necessarily something you would have thought worthy of your attention, no." He leaned back. "I hadn't heard of it myself actually. There is to be an international energy conference in France next week and the Minister of Solar Energy has requested your services as a bodyguard." Bond raised his eyebrows slowly. "I know. Apparently he is worried that someone may attack the conference. We haven't heard anything worth paying attention to, but he claims that there are plots against the new forms of energy and he is worried that they may attack at this conference since all of the forerunners in renewable energy will be gathered in one place. As if the information and technology isn't common enough to be spread in other ways."

"And he has specifically requested my services?" the secret agent asked.

"Not you specifically, no," M allowed. "He asked for someone who will do whatever it takes to defend the future of the country and I know that you are aching to get back in the field."

Bond conceded the point. "It might not be as interesting as my usual fare, but I will admit that it will be better than watching the recruits fall on their backs as they fire the weapons Q branch gives them."

"And in case the rumours of an attack do prove to be of sustenance, I have faith you will make the right choice and do what needs to be done."

"Is that an approval for my disobeying of orders?" he asked with a small smirk.

"It is a concession that, on occasion, your instincts have led you better than all the data we have on a situation and we are all incredibly thankful that Q is a genius at adapting to your

hare-brained plans."

Double-oh Seven grinned. "I think we all know he has his own hare-brained plans in that head of his. When is the conference?"

"It begins on Thursday, ending on Sunday afternoon. I'll forward you the details. The minister said he does not need to meet you until Thursday evening when he will take you out to dinner so that he can give you his itinerary for the conference and meet you face to face."

"Could he not give me the details ahead of time?"

"The attendees do not receive their itineraries until they check into the hotel, I'm afraid."

"Alright. Anything else before I check in downstairs?" Bond asked as he stood.

"No. There shouldn't be anything unusual so your standard equipment from Q branch should suffice. I've let Q know already."

"I'm sure he already has some special gadget picked out for me."

* * *

><p>"No, I do not have an exploding pen for you, Double-oh Seven," Q scolded him as he handed over the small, thin box. "The pen is a recording device that uploads directly to Q branch. It has a directional option so you can have it record sounds from all directions, or, if you click the button so that it is in position to write, then the other end of the pen may be pointed in the direction you wish to hear." Bond clicked the pen and pointed it at some of the others in Q branch. Q snatched it back and replaced it in the box.<p>

"As I said, the recording goes directly to the branch but we can direct a stream into your earpiece as well if you would like. Standard gun and radio as well. We are also ready to field test these." He walked over to a shelf and pulled down a clear box containing what appeared to be ordinary ties.

"Neckties which also function as tourniquets. Tie it around a wound and it responds to the presence of blood and tightens itself to staunch the flow. It will also absorb the blood and not let it seep through to the other side so it can be worn again. Although we do recommend washing it as soon as you are able."

"No chance of accidental strangulation then, Q?" Bond asked with a grin as he picked one out and tied it around his neck.

"I would not have said it was ready for a field test if there was," he replied sternly before letting a ghost of a smile creep onto his features. "But if you go off mission like in Algiers I will be personally seeing how fast I can remotely modify it."

"The warning is much appreciated, Q." The quartermaster merely rolled his eyes and reached back onto his desk to hand Bond a manila folder.

"In here are your train tickets and hotel information for the week. There is also background on the minister you are guarding and the standard pamphlet for the conference. The minister's itinerary is also in there so you can read up on the talks you will be attending if you do not wish to be bored out of your mind."

"I thought the itineraries weren't released yet?"

"M may run the SIS, but I run the internet. Nothing is safe from me. I'm sure you could've even found it if you knew where to look Mr. Bond."

"No chance of changes?"

"Of course there is a chance that it may undergo last minute alterations, but we will update you if there are any."

Bond nodded his thanks and departed to go do some research before ending the day at the shooting range as was his habit when in London. It was only Tuesday, but it was always best to be prepared.

3. Rumours Abroad

The flat was quiet when Q arrived home just after two. He keyed in the code while letting the hidden camera scan his face and unlock the door. He tried to be quiet but he stubbed his toe on the sofa as he entered the sitting area in the dark. A voice drifted out from the bedroom.

"If you were home more often you would know where the sofa was in the dark."

"You would not notice if I got rid of it," he retorted immediately now that he knew he didn't have to be quiet. "You are hardly ever home either except to collapse on the bed and maybe zap a meal for dinner." He walked back toward the front door and flicked on the light to glare at the horribly old sofa that he kicked every time he entered in the dark and then see Bel emerging from the hallway. She had a glass of whiskey in her hand and a long shirt on over her bare legs. Q smiled.

"Come join me?" she asked flirtatiously.

"Let me put away my things and grab a glass for myself," he replied in the same tone.

Of course, nothing exciting happened that night. They both were exhausted and merely sat in the peaceful quiet for a while with only the ice in their glasses making any noise as they idly shifted. They talked about their day, what little Q could share of it, and Bel told him all the latest gossip at the BBC.

"Later this week there is some international energy conference we are thinking of covering," she said. "The network is going to do a special on the world of the future and Hector has been assigned to go to Paris to cover the event. I thought we might do our own little special since he is already over there." While she was talking Q had sat up and stared at her worryingly. "What?" she asked when she looked over at him.

"Don't go."

"Why not?"

"It could be dangerous," he replied. "There have been some threats of attacks planned for that conference and I don't want to see Hector on a list of deceased."

"Is that all you have for me?" she asked when he doesn't say anything further. "Where is the Freddie I fell in love with and frequently was exasperated with as he charged into danger to pursue a story?"

"He grew up and he realised how fragile life really is." He ducked his head. "He realised that he is not infallible nor invincible." She stroked his cheek.

"If that event proved anything to me, I think it proved that you are invincible," she said gently. "We all thought you were going to be dead. I don't know what I would've done if you had left me."

"What would you have done?" he asked curiously, meeting her eyes again with the innocent look on his face that she could never resist.

"Oh you know, probably gotten so distraught I would have had sex with Hector on the news desk while cameras were rolling and then shot myself on live telly." Q couldn't help but giggle at the scenario.

"A performance to be remembered throughout the ages," he joked. "Producer of acclaimed television news show 'The Hour' decides to star in a porno. The headlines would read 'The Coming of the Hour', 'A Crowning Achievement for The Hour', 'The Hour is Coming.'"

"'Loose Lips don't just Sink Ships,'" she interrupted.

"'The News Show you can Wank to.'"

"'Moneypenny moves on from Bond.'"

"Only you call me that and I would never leave you." The joking tone left the room. "I know I cannot convince you to stay away from the conference, but promise me you will tell the team to be extra careful?"

"Of course. Anything for you." She pecked him on the cheek.

"I'll try to let you know if I find out anything more with solid proof I can give you."

"Don't you worry. I have a team of news agents working to sniff out any sign of a story. You just focus on your job and I'll focus on mine." He wished he could tell her that he also had his own staff of agents that were looking for the same intel, if in a less legal way. But as part of the standard secrecy agreement he could only say so much. He nodded and placed his glass on the side table.

"I think it is time for both of us to sleep. I have to be back in the

office at eight tomorrow."

"Sleep sounds good indeed." Q checked that his alarm was set, took off his glasses, and promptly fell into a deep oblivion.

* * *

><p>Freddie was gone already in the morning when she woke up, but there was a still warm tea kettle on the counter with a little note for her.<p>

My dear Moneypenny. I thought I'd let you sleep; you look so peaceful when you sleep. Today looks like a day where I might be home earlier. Please pass on the warning of caution to Hector and the rest of the team going to Paris. With much love, Your James.

She grinned as she poured out the tea and grabbed the newspaper lying on the kitchen table and flicked through the latest news. There was the usual gossip about the debutantes getting married and throwing large parties with tons of celebrities in attendance. She skipped over the sports news entirely and looked at the international section. There was a brief article mentioning the energy conference, but nothing that indicated unrest in the public over the changes that were to be announced.

She clicked on the radio to listen to the morning talk show as she made herself a simple breakfast of eggs and toast. She had just gotten out the eggs when her phone rang. She turned off the hob and walked back to the bedroom to grab it off the table.

"Hello?"

"How soon can you make it into the office?"

"In about fifteen minutes. What's the matter, Randall?"

"News on the energy conference from an anonymous source that needs follow up."

"I'll be right in then." She hung up the phone and quickly changed into her work clothes. Her tablet was thrown in her bag, the eggs back in the fridge, and with a piece of toast in hand she was out the door.

Randall met her in the office lobby and handed her a printout of an email.

"It's from the same email address as before," Randall said unhappily. She frowned at him as they stepped into the elevator.

"I know you don't trust the source, but they've never led us wrong before. I will ask Lix to talk to her sources and see if she can find anything to corroborate what they have to say." She finished scanning the email. "I must say this is not the first I've heard. Someone mentioned rumours of the same sort to me last night, but they had only rumours, no proof."

"Well we can look into it, but we also do need to still work on this week's show as well as preparation for the trip."

"Yes, we have the story about the shootings in the school in America as well as the release of a new rating system for violence in video games and possible ties between the two of them," Bel said as she walked over to her whiteboard on the wall. They might be in the digital age, but some things are easier to organise when written out on the wall. "We talked to the professor at University of Central London who has agreed to come and talk about the psychological effects of simulated violence on children and what else can be learned from simulations. We also have the news of the new art installation in the Tate Modern and the protests that have been happening outside. Eldridge has been working on cutting together footage of that with the interview Simon did with the artist a few weeks ago."

"I will leave you to your preparations then." Randall left the room and Bel called for Sissy to find Hector and send him in. She would need to let him know of the additional danger that he may experience in Paris. She already could hear him protesting and proudly reminding her that he was an officer in the war and received three medals of honour. But they would quickly just end up in one of their usual bickering arguments. Ah well. She would feel better knowing that she had warned him.

4. Attracted to You

As Q had predicted, Wednesday was a shorter day. There were some inter departmental meetings he begrudgingly attended, but he was able to walk away feeling good and proud of the work his branch had done. He was in a good mood when he got home and Bel was there to meet him. To celebrate the rare occasion, they had dinner out at a local restaurant and then were able to relax on the sofa together. Bel fell asleep against Q while he read poetry to her.

It was Thursday that was the busier day. Bond was leaving as well as a couple other agents who were being sent to gather intel on some suspicious start-up businesses across the globe that they suspected could be cover-ups. The usual jewellery shops and construction companies. Each agent needed equipment and earpieces and one group would require special monitoring as it was a pair of agents, one just finishing up training.

Other Q branch personnel handled the distribution of equipment and the last minute instructions to the agents while Q tinkered in the lab with a new experiment. Nothing applicable yet, but he had read an article on using sound waves to make tractor beams and the nerd in him could not resist giving it a go.

He was internally rocking out to the score from the original "Star Trek" series when he was interrupted. R at least knew the code to call out to pause his music and he whirled around toward the door when the sound in his ear cut off.

She stood in the doorway with an eyebrow raised but a smile on her face. "Are you working on the tractor beam?"

"I nearly got it," he responded with a grin as he gestured for her to walk closer. "It is really quite genius and fairly easy to manufacture. The only issue is scaling it up. I have been able to levitate a couple particles and by adjusting the boundary conditions

I can move it around, but there is a limited range and unfortunately it does only work on pea-sized objects. So unless our agents need to fling some peas across the table, I don't think it will be useful yet. Sadly it will probably be shelved after today."

"Just leave the designs on the server," R said as she straightened. "Maybe some of our audio engineers will be able to build on what you have. At any rate, we could possibly modify the design to create a soundless barrier for information exchanges. Or a vacuum of sound to muffle the explosions and gunshots our agents are so fond of making."

Q's eyes lit up at that. He wheeled his stool over to the computer on the table behind him and began typing. "Excellent ideas. I've added them to the document. Does Joel have much on his plate at the moment?" R thought for a minute and then shook her head. "He would be interested in this. I'll pass it on to him. But what was it you came in here to tell me?"

"Ah, right. Bond wanted to see you before he left."

"Did he say why?" Brows furrowed in confusion, Q saved the file and turned off the external power supply he had hooked up and the pea fell to the table.

"I think he just wanted to ask you about some extra equipment."

* * *

><p>Sure enough, Bond was waiting for him in his office, admiring the gun he had laid out on the centre table. "Ah Double-oh Seven," he greeted as he gently but firmly took the gun from the agent's hands and replaced it in its stand. "R tells me you had some questions about last minute equipment?"<p>

"Yes, I was wondering how your branch was progressing on the bulletproof shirts. It might make Mr. Addington feel safer if he was wearing one and I was required to leave for any reason."

"Let me look." Q sat down at his computer and let it scan his fingerprints and retina to wake back up. A quick search through the ongoing project database revealed the answer. "It is not field ready to my standards, however, since there is no adverse side effects to wearing the shirt, I would gladly send one with you to undergo a field test. Just do inform Mr. Addington that it will not stop bullets completely and he should not act as if he is invincible. He has you to do that for him."

"Are you saying I'm invincible?"

"I'm saying you are reckless and irresponsible at times and often act like nothing can hurt you. It is not a trait to be encouraged." Bond opened his mouth to retort but there was a knock on Q's door and one of the minions stuck his head inside. He opened his mouth to speak but paused when he saw 007. Q indicated for him to speak.

"There is an update on the intel about the energy conference, sir," he said. "It has moved beyond rumour stage. The updated data is in your inbox." Q clicked over and saw that the email was, in fact, there.

"Thank you Eric. Can you please grab a white bulletproof shirt for Mr. Bond? They are going to be field tested this weekend."

"Wait," Bond said before the man could leave. "Are there any other colours available?"

"Dark blue, light blue, maroon, and black." He looked back at Eric. "Was there another one too?"

"There's a green and a deep purple as well, sir."

"I'll take the white, the black, and the maroon then."

"Yes sir." He hurried out of the office and went to find the requested shirts. Q sat reading his email while Bond waited in the visitor's chair. He watched Q's eyebrows furrow and his lips pressed tight together and knew that it was not pleasant news. Not that there usually was in their field. The Quartermaster sighed and closed his eyes as he ran his hands through his hair. Then with a shake of his head he straightened back up and began typing.

"Unfortunately the rumours of a threat against the conference have been confirmed as a conspiracy." He looked at Bond with a half-hearted smile. "I guess we are lucky M assigned you to this bodyguard mission. We haven't yet been able to determine who is making the threats, but it seems like there is a plan in place to set off a bomb during the conference. An attempt to kill the attendees, or destroy the prototypes, we aren't sure."

"Any indication when?" the agent asked.

"No. Not yet. The level of activity suggests not tonight."

"That makes sense. If it is an international conference, they cannot be sure that all attendees will arrive until tomorrow."

"Correct." Q seemed to think about something for a minute. He arrived at a decision. "I may have a favour to ask of you."

"Off the books?" The agent was curious. Typically, unless asked to by an agent he trusted, the Quartermaster was one to stick to the rule book. He stretched it and did things his own way, sure. But whatever this was seemed to give him pause.

"Yes. You can think of it as a side mission. I need you-" he cut off as a knock sounded and Eric walked back in with the three requested shirts on hangers.

"Here are the shirts, sir." Bond stood up and took them off the engineer and inspected them.

"Any special washing instructions?" he joked.

"Wash them as you would any of your own shirts, sir," he replied. "These have been washed a couple times so there shouldn't be any bleed from the dye anymore."

"Thank you, Eric," Q dismissed him. When the door was closed, Bond turned back to Q to hear about this side mission. "Completely off the

record there are some people I care about that will reporting on the conference."

"So you do have a life outside the basement!" The agent grinned. Q's deadpan glare let him know that this was not the appropriate time. He typed on his computer and then spun it around to show Bond the images on the screen.

"This is Hector and the other is Isaac," he explained. "Those are the only two I know for sure will be there, but anyone else with them should also be treated the same. Please keep an eye out for them. And if they are about to do something reckless and put themselves in danger, scare them straight. I would not like them harmed."

"Can't you just tell them not to go?"

"They are nearly as stubborn as you, Double-oh Seven. I can hardly tell you what to do despite the fact that I outrank you."

"And they don't know that you are SIS," Bond completed.

"Correct. They don't even know I'm alive. They believe I died five years ago." They sat in silence for a moment. Bond felt sorry for him. He didn't know how it felt to still have people alive who you couldn't communicate with, but he had lost enough people in his life to know that it wasn't easy on either side of the deal.

"I will keep an eye out for them. They won't find out you are alive from me." Q caught and held his eyes for a second before nodding solemnly.

"Thank you."

End
file.